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WIAB 07-00

DATE: November 22, 2000
TO: All Local Workforce Investment Areas
FROM: Cheryl A. Brush, Chief, Workforce Systems Bureau
SUBJECT: Questions and Answers

Attached is a compilation of questions and answers that have been issued over the last few weeks. These are being made available to the system to ensure a common understanding of the issues.

Please contact your grant officer if you have any questions.

Attachment

GENERAL

- Q Can we pay a prevailing wage for Limited Internships?
- A Yes; the wage should consider the participant's experience and the employer's prevailing wage for entry level employment in the occupation.
- Q If you have a dual enrollment in the Adult and Dislocated Worker Program, must both programs remain open until the participant completes training?
- A Not necessarily. If you need to access funds from a specific program the participant must of course be active in that program. On the other hand, if funding from one program is no longer necessary, exit him/her from that program and eliminate double data entry. Remember, the participant record will not enter the "follow-up or customer satisfaction system" until the participant separates from WIA (all programs). The only caution here is: eligibility must be re-verified if, down the road, you want to re-enroll.....so be sure.
- Q A person starts WIA through your office, then decides to relocate. It appears that, in the case of an Adult Program participant moving out of the Area, you have to exit the person and they have to start over again in their new location. What about other programs? And what if they are still in the same Area? How about if they are at a different local office, but still under the same local agreement (still in the same region)?
- A To move a client from one office/provider to another in the same region, simply shut down the first office's activity, and open an appropriate activity in the receiving office. Both sites will get credit for subsequent outcomes. When moving from one Area to another, it is necessary to exit (terminate) the participant in one Area and complete the intake/eligibility/enrollment in the other. Remember that Areas don't necessarily have the same eligibility criteria under WIA, so this isn't really a transfer but an exit and reenrollment. When the exit and reenrollment occur in the same month, the first enrolling entity is not responsible for follow up. When the exit and reenrollment activities don't happen in the same month, the system won't catch the duplication, and both programs that had the participant enrolled will be responsible for follow up.
- Q Is it really true that you can't change the maximum authorized cost on the new -04, as it says in the TAG? Why? What about changes made in conversation with the bookstore when the 04 is for \$100, and the books cost \$102?
- A It is true that the "maximum authorized cost" on the 04 form should not be changed. Your accurate completion of the top portion of the 04 gives the vendor and participant necessary parameters – specifically, what can be purchased and the maximum amount of funds you are willing to provide for that purchase. If changes were accepted without question, individuals other than the case manager could fraudulently adjust the parameters of the document. If, as in your example, a minor adjustment is necessary, the 04 should be returned to the case manager, who can make the adjustment, and date and initial the adjustment prior to its submission to Accounting in Boise. Be prepared, however, for a phone call from Accounting staff to verify your agreement to this adjustment – better safe than sorry!!

- Q Where can we find more **detailed** information on activity codes and service codes?
- A More detailed information on activity codes can be found in the Introduction TAG. Please note that the definitions of several activities reflected in the MIS and TAGs may be confusing and poorly defined (i.e., Mentoring for Academic Success vs. Mentoring for Employment Success). These activities and their definitions were lifted from draft federal reporting guidelines. At the time of WIA implementation, the decision was made to comply with the draft reporting guidelines. As those guidelines are finalized, changes will be incorporated in the MIS and TAGs.
- Q To show that a person is not likely to return to the same type of work, the TAG says we can use 'Printed automated Idaho Department of Labor screens that indicates lack of industry/occupation availability'. What screens are they referring to?
- A This reference is not to any particular screen; it is referring to our agency's labor market information available via the Internet. Any information that supports the employment or training decision/goal may be used. This could be hard copy information from the labor market analyst or copies of screens of labor market information.
- Q Under the section about US work authorization, the TAG states: "Registrants shall be citizens and nationals of the United States, lawfully admitted permanent resident aliens, refugees, asylees, and parolees, and other immigrants authorized by the Attorney General to work in the U.S." I asked about this when were in Boise, but nobody had an answer. It seems to me that the 'and(s)' should be replaced with 'or(s)' because it is very difficult to find people who are citizens AND aliens AND refugees, etc. Also, what's an asylee? I'm sure it's supposed to be someone who is seeking asylum but I can't find the work in any of my on-line dictionaries.
- A We can't control the terms that INS and other federal agencies choose to use. The important issue is that our registrants are authorized to work in this country.
- Q How do we document the intangible services? Like 2-hour career exploration before registration, etc. Is it done on cross reference with a DS screen or do we just log it on paper in their files? How do you know what we've done with someone regarding these activities? Where do we document it?
- A Documentation of services received prior to registration for WIA is not required in the WIA files. However, some notation regarding such services may be helpful as you complete the assessment process for youth, or as you document the need for intensive/training services for adults/dislocated workers.
- Q What can or can't be paid for in the job search activity. Transportation? License fees, work clothes?
- A All of these could be acceptable costs in the job search activity. It is important that we not purchase work-related items that the employer typically provides for a participant who is going to work with that employer.

YOUTH

- Q Must every youth have both an education and an employment goal?
- A No. Although the law does require an age-related employment goal for every youth, an educational goal is only required if and when it is appropriate.
- Q Can we wait until our region's Skill Attainment package is complete before setting a "basic skills goal" for youth?
- A Yes. Just make a notation in the youth's file that looks something like this: initial assessment indicates or supports a need for basic skills but actual goal will be delayed until regional benchmarks are established..... Or you could set the goal using results from a TABE survey or battery since its pretty safe to assume this tool will be included as one of your pre-test, post-test options (just a thought).
- Q If a case manager opts to delay setting a basic skill goal, does this allow him/her to delay setting other skill attainment goals?
- A No: at least ONE skill attainment goal must still be set within 30 days of enrollment. This means you will be choosing a goal or goals from the work readiness group (pre-employment and work maturity) or occupational skills. If these sections of the regional skill attainment system are also not complete, you at least have the mechanism with which to determine deficiency in the area of work readiness by using the WIA 130 series of assessment tools. You can therefore couch a goal in terms of working with a given youth on pre-employment and/or work readiness skills to attain proficiency levels determined by the local board. Then, when skill attainment tools and benchmarks are adopted, you will be able to post-test with regionally-appropriate instruments.
- Q Can we do retroactive goal setting on occupational skills?
- A If assessments that meet regional standards were done at an earlier date, and goals were set/attained according to regional standards but just not entered into the MIS, then they could be added later. If you are talking about going back now and retroactively creating assessments, goals, and attainments, that would not be appropriate.
- Q Can the IEP be used to measure a skill attainment?
- A Based on guidance from the Department of Education, IEPs will only be acceptable as pre- and post-assessment instruments when they contain specific elements identified by the Department of Education as necessary for this purpose; otherwise, providers will need to use other instruments identified by your local board. We have not yet received the IEP standards that the Department of Education is developing, but will forward this material to local board staff when we receive it Since Local Boards are responsible for development of the details regarding measurement of skill attainments within the parameters provided by the State, your local IWB staff will be able to provide further guidance at that time.

Q If a client is low functioning and you have documentation, do we still have to use the TABE to test them? Sometimes the testing process is humiliating.

A Determination of basic skills deficient (y/n) is required as part of the WIA application process. The State asked each region to identify the instrument(s) that will be used to test for basic skills deficiency. Please refer to the Eligibility TAG which contains several options to determine yes or no for this characteristic.

Q If you test using the TABE at the beginning, to document their progress, do we have to use the TABE at the end, or can we use their graduation?

A Testing instruments measure acquisition of skills and knowledge in different ways and are calibrated differently enough that crossing testing mechanisms per se would almost certainly compromise the reliability of the results, unless you can demonstrate that both mechanisms are in fact measuring precisely the same thing.

This question, however, seems to be talking about use of an official basic skill test at entry and a proxy measure to demonstrate basic skill gain. Because high school graduation and the attainment of a GED are generally considered to be indicative of proficiency at the 12th grade level, these universally-recognized proxy measures would be acceptable demonstration of basic skill attainment, if it were acceptable to the local IWB. This should not be construed to suggest that any and all proxy measures can be said to demonstrate proficiency, but those that are universally-recognized, such as graduation and attainment of a GED, would work.

Graduation from secondary school can also be counted as it's own outcome – that of attaining a diploma or equivalency.

Q Does a youth have to enter employment IN the first quarter after exit or does the system also credit those who have entered employment prior to exit?

A The performance measure actually reflects the # of youth (who were unemployed at registration) who have entered employment by the end of the first quarter after exit divided by the number of older youth that exit during the quarter. So, yes, those entering employment prior to exit will count in the measure, but only IF they are employed in the quarter following exit. The determination of whether an individual is employed is made based on their status in the first quarter after exit, but that status could have begun prior to that quarter. The bottom line is that the youth must be employed in the first quarter after exit.

Q How is an older youth counted if he/she is in post-secondary training/advanced training AND is employed after exit?

A Youth in both employment and post-secondary education/advanced training in the first quarter after exit will be included in the measure. Only those who are unemployed and in post-secondary education/advanced training are excluded.

Q Can a credential be issued for an older youth's completion of a job search workshop?

- A Section 666.100 of the WIA regulations states that credentials may be awarded for the attainment of educational or occupational skills. This would not appear to include job search or job readiness training. Remember, to be counted in this measure, the youth must have been employed or in post-secondary education or advanced training BY THE END OF the first quarter after exit AND RECEIVED A CREDENTIAL BY THE END OF THE THIRD QUARTER AFTER EXIT.

DISLOCATED WORKER

- Q Is there any way for a person who quit a job to be eligible as a Dislocated Worker? I had a person come in who had been told by her doctor that she should not continue in the work that she had been doing. She quit. She was allowed her UI benefits.
- A The individual must meet the eligibility criteria of one of the Dislocated Worker eligibility groups. Based on the information provided, this individual does not meet the criteria of a Dislocated Worker group.
- Q If someone's hours are greatly reduced and they are receiving UI but still technically employed, can they be a dislocated worker? As I read the TAG, this person would not be eligible since they are still employed. Is that right?
- A Again, the individual must meet the eligibility criteria of one of the Dislocated Worker eligibility groups. Based on the information provided, the person would only be eligible for Dislocated Worker services if she/he has received a notice of layoff/termination, or there has been a general announcement that the business will close or a substantial layoff will occur.
- Q How do we deal with what was formerly termed 'unsuitable work'. If someone has been laid off from a job, they are collecting UI but they take another part time - lower paying job, are they still eligible as a Dislocated worker?
- A Under WIA, there is no reference to the terms, "unsuitable work" or "income maintenance" as in JTPA. Also, under WIA, eligibility for dislocated worker services does NOT end if the participant happens to return to work with the layoff employer.

What is required under WIA? Only this: the case manager must look at the participant's "self-sufficiency" status when moving the participant from Core to Intensive services. (See Eligibility TAG, page 6). Therefore, if an individual becomes employed after moving beyond core services, the case manager is free to determine if continuation of services is appropriate.

FOLLOW-UP

- Q A person has been exited from WIA but is still within the forever follow-up period. You do follow-up and find out that he has a different job than at exit. Do you data enter the new job someplace?
- A There is no need to data enter the new job information. However, it would be wise to make a note in the client record in case there is a need for supplemental information later.

Q A staff person was unable to use the post-program services activity for payment.

A Please contact your grants manager for assistance when this occurs. To avoid problems with processing, note the appropriate fund number coding for the 04 and refer to the Followup TAG for guidelines and limitations.

WIA MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (MIS)

Q Can we enter information on the client information screen (name, address, phone) and use the notes section without completing an enrollment? If yes, how long will the information be available (assuming the participant never completes his/her registration)?

A Yes, and the information should be available for 3 years (a general system purge is anticipated after 3 years). Advantages include: no paper and preliminary notes that can be accessed by other staff or even other local offices.

Q How can I print the entire on-line “notes” section?

A Highlight the entry(s) you want to print, press “edit” “copy”. Open a Word document, hit the paste key and you should have all your notes. Thanks to Region II, an enhancement request has been submitted so we can print them directly from the on-line system. Stay tuned.....

Q Why does it take so long for the “obligation” field to update?

A This is a trick question. A change to the participant’s \$ obligation will be reflected immediately on his/her activity record and within a Participant Activity Report. It’s the financial file that updates only once per month. Consequently, your obligation control register (located within Accounting/Payroll section) will not reflect the change until next month’s financial update. Note that the monthly updates will occur no later than the 15th of each month.

Q Why does the “determination date” always reflect today’s date?

A It defaults to the current date but should be changed to reflect the participant’s actual determination (application) date, unless of course your determination date and the day you enter the information are one-and-the-same. *A system enhancement has already been requested. This field will soon appear blank and require an entry from the case manager. The term “determination date” may also be changed to read “application date”.*

Q If the participant’s address changes, is it necessary to have the programmer change the permanent record?

A It depends!! The “permanent record”, which is created at the time of enrollment, is a frozen picture of data related to eligibility. As you know, residency may be a part of eligibility in your region. So, if the address provided at the time of registration was inaccurate, inform your grants manager; we’ll pass it on to the programmer.

If the participant's address or phone number changes after enrollment, simply update the "Client" screen. (Accounting staff and the customer satisfaction contractor are given information from the "Client" screen.)

Q Is there a way to generate reports on Customer Satisfaction survey data for employers?

A Employer Customer Satisfaction surveys, processes, and reporting are in early development stages.

Q How do we find out if our Region is meeting the Customer Satisfaction performance measure?

A We recently received the weighted measures from USDOL to apply to the 3 required customer satisfaction questions in the performance measure. We are currently involved with developing a process to apply the weights and when complete will promptly notify WIA staff.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Pre-Employment Assessment form and the Skill Attainment Goals page of the Youth Training Plan (3rd page) will soon be revised to reflect 3 basic skill areas: reading, language and math. You will be notified when the revised form is available online.

Be sure to use **new** payment forms (NCR forms with color copies) for supportive services, weekly time sheets, OJT payments, etc.. Accounting staff are experiencing delays as they continue to receive old forms and printed facsimiles (no color copies) from the internet. The old JTPA forms have codes that are obsolete in WIA. *They realize old forms may continue to trickle in but "thank you" in advance for moving to the new forms as quickly as possible.*

Late breaking news:

The WIA-175 and WIA-185 forms for work experience can be found on the Internet but they are hidden within the WIA-184 Supervisor Workbook. They will soon be available under their respective form numbers.

Also, there seems to be two versions of the WIA-17 OJT Timesheet. A printed version is titled WIA Timesheet/Invoice but the Internet version is titled OJT Timesheet/Invoice. We will check both versions for additional discrepancies. Continue to use the new NCR forms for OJT monthly reports until/unless instructed otherwise.